



# Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning

*Planning for the Challenges Ahead*



**Richard J. Bruckner**  
Director

October 3, 2013

**TO:** Historical Landmarks and Records Commissioners:  
Louis E. Skelton, Chairman  
Stephen J. Sass, Vice Chairman  
Yolanda Duarte-White, Commissioner  
Elysha Dory, Commissioner  
Ivy Sun, Commissioner

**FROM:** Phillip Estes, AICP  
Principal Planner

**SUBJECT:** October 11, 2013 Meeting  
Proposed Mills Act and Historic Preservation Ordinances

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Our approach to historic preservation has been twofold; adopt a Mills Act ordinance and adopt a comprehensive historic preservation ordinance.

As you know, the Board of Supervisors conducted a public hearing on May 28, 2013 and directed Regional Planning and County Counsel to prepare a final ordinance to implement the Mills Act. Staff will provide your Commission with a project update on October 11, 2013.

Additionally, staff is working to prepare a draft historic preservation ordinance for the unincorporated areas of the County. To facilitate an initial discussion on October 11, 2013, attached is a short outline of key aspects of a preservation ordinance.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss further, please feel free to contact me at 213-974-6425 or email at [pestes@planning.lacounty.gov](mailto:pestes@planning.lacounty.gov).

**1. Types of designations and sample designation criteria**

- a. Individual landmarks (buildings, structures, sites, interiors accessible to the public)

*Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of the history of the County, region, or State; it is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the history of the County, region, or State; it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, architectural style, period, landscape, or method of construction, or represents the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder, or possesses artistic values of significance; yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important locally in prehistory or history.*

- b. Landmark tree

*One of the largest or oldest trees species located in the County; has historical significance due to an association with a historic event, person, site, street, or structure; defining landmark or significant outstanding feature of a neighborhood.*

- c. Historic districts

*Minimum of 50 percent of properties contributing; grouping represents a significant and distinguishable entity of importance of a defined historic, cultural, development and/or architectural context.*

**2. Designation and owner consent**

- a. Historic districts would require 51% of property owners and Board approval to designate.
- b. Individual landmarks and trees would require Board approval to designate.
- c. Owner authorization not required to submit application to nominate property.

**3. Authority to designate (in order of review)**

- a. Landmarks Commission: may recommend approval or disapprove.
- b. Planning Commission: may recommend approval or disapprove historic district overlay map only.
- c. Board of Supervisors: may approve or disapprove all designations.

**4. Development review process for landmark and districts**

- a. Staff would review/authorize a project which is consistent with the “Secretary of the Interior Standards.”
- b. Landmarks Commission would review a project inconsistent with Secretary’s Standards, staff referrals, and appeals of staff determination.
- c. Economic hardship review by Landmarks Commission (a provision where the owner of a landmark property may seek relief from the ordinance).